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General and complete disarmament

Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. On 2 December 2009, the General Assembly adopted resolution 64/34, entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation". In paragraph 8, it requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the issue of the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and to submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-fifth session.

2. Pursuant to that request, on 26 February 2010, a note verbale was sent to Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are reproduced in section II below. Additional replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Brazil

[Original: English]
[22 June 2010]

1. Brazil considers that a peaceful, secure and equitable international order can only be achieved by means of a reinvigorated multilateralism. Multilateral decision-making processes should reflect new multipolar realities, in a truly democratic manner, so as to address legitimate concerns of all nations.

2. A founding member of the United Nations, Brazil believes that the Organization is the best instrument at the disposal of the international community to confront present day challenges. Brazil is party to all major multilateral instruments in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

3. While deeply committed to both objectives, as a non-nuclear-weapon State, Brazil cannot but stress the existing imbalances in their implementation. The commitment by nuclear-weapon States to disarm is as much a political decision as the decision not to proliferate. It is regrettable that, four decades after the entry into force of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the cornerstone of the international community's efforts for peace and security, the actual accomplishment of commitments by nuclear-weapon States under article VI remains elusive. Under these circumstances, the world continues to be divided between "haves" and "have-nots", as a coronation of the imbalances of an archaic international system.

4. Multilateralism should represent for international relations what democracy embodies at the national level. The perpetuation of imbalances that go against the spirit of multilateralism and the notion of equality cannot be tolerated.

5. Brazil supports the work of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body for disarmament. Brazil believes that the immediate commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive materials is part of a realistic, gradual approach that can lead to the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament. Brazil expects that, in the near future, the Conference on Disarmament will be entrusted with the mandate to adopt a comprehensive disarmament programme within a

timebound frame, leading to general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[27 May 2010]

1. Cuba reaffirms that multilateralism is an imperative at the present time, particularly in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, and reiterates the views it set forth in the reply transmitted to the Secretary-General pursuant to General Assembly resolution 63/50, which was reproduced in the report of the Secretary-General in document A/64/117/Add.1.

2. The complex international situation and the need for a collective response to the urgent problems facing humanity confirm the importance of the resolution on the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation as a contribution to the debates and to the search for effective and lasting solutions in these spheres.

3. The United Nations, its Charter and international law continue to be essential and of paramount importance for the preservation and maintenance of international peace and security and the strengthening of international cooperation. The United Nations, with its virtually universal membership and well established international legitimacy and hence, multilateralism, remains the central forum for analysing the urgent problems and global challenges currently faced by all States. The responsibility to facilitate and achieve economic development and social progress throughout the world, and to respond to threats to international peace and security, must be shared among all States and exercised in a multilateral manner through the United Nations.

4. True multilateralism is the key to the successful and effective conduct of negotiations on disarmament and arms control aimed at strengthening universal norms and broadening their scope. The preservation and strengthening of existing disarmament and arms control treaties contribute to the regime of mutual trust which needs to exist among States Members of the United Nations which are parties to them and ultimately, to the strengthening of international peace and security.

5. Disarmament and arms control agreements which are negotiated and implemented within a genuinely multilateral, effective, full and non-discriminatory framework provide an appropriate mechanism to enable the States parties to hold consultations and cooperate in the solution of any problem which may arise regarding their objectives or the application of their provisions.

6. There are positive multilateral experiences in the sphere of disarmament and arms control which have had a significant impact and relevance for international peace and security. By way of example, mention may be made of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which seeks the total elimination of this category of weapons of mass destruction within a fixed period. This is not quite the case with the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, where, as a result of the actions of certain countries, no agreement has been reached on a protocol to strengthen the Convention, making it incomplete and of limited effectiveness.

7. The full implementation of the provisions of the treaties on weapons of mass destruction concerning the promotion of international cooperation is still a chimera. This failure disrupts the balance needed in the application of the provisions of these treaties, and at the same time undermines their objectives and purposes. In the case of nuclear weapons, no firm commitments have been made for their elimination because of the fierce opposition of some of the nuclear-weapon States, led by the United States of America, to taking on the commitment under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

8. The constant erosion of multilateralism in the sphere of arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament and the application of unilateral measures by some States Members and groups of States Members of the United Nations to resolve their security problems are endangering international peace and security and undermining confidence in the international security system and the foundations of the United Nations itself. This is true of the doctrine of effective multilateralism, which is gaining ground in some disarmament treaties and is subtly or overtly departing from true multilateralism.

9. The persistence of attacks on multilateralism in the sphere of disarmament gives cause for concern. Certain countries persist in organizing events and summit meetings outside the framework of the mechanisms and bodies established by the United Nations and taking up topics of great significance to the entire international community without the participation of all the parties concerned. The dangerous tendency to force Member States, within the context of genuine international forums on disarmament and arms control, to accept proposals and courses of action which have been agreed upon in a selective and discriminatory manner, is even more regrettable and damaging to the true spirit of multilateralism.

10. Experience has shown that the goals of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are not going to be achieved through the application of unilateral measures, the conclusion of strategic alliances to promote agreements negotiated outside internationally recognized multilateral frameworks or the threat or use of force. Multilateralism and peaceful solutions negotiated through the organs established for such purposes and in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations continue to be the only appropriate way to settle disputes.

11. Military interventionism in Iraq, undertaken in clear defiance of international opinion, along with its disastrous consequences, confirm the ineffectiveness of unilateralism in addressing the problems of the modern world. It is only by seeking negotiated solutions in a multilateral framework and acknowledging the need to arrive at collective agreements that international peace and security can be safeguarded.

12. The strengthening of multilateralism necessitates full and far-reaching reform of the United Nations, which continues to be the central and essential forum for addressing questions of international cooperation to promote economic development and social progress, peace and security, human rights and the rule of law, on the basis of dialogue, cooperation and the building of consensus among States.

13. The General Assembly, as the most representative and democratic organ of the United Nations, must play a central role in the efforts to consolidate the multilateral route.

14. Cuba reaffirms its commitment to the promotion, preservation and strengthening of multilateralism and the multilateral decision-making process under the auspices of the United Nations, in strict accordance with its Charter and international law, with the aim of creating a multipolar, just and equitable world order.

Georgia

[Original: English]
[4 June 2010]

1. Georgia accords special attention to the problems of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and disarmament, especially at a time when the risk of proliferation and actual use of nuclear weapons constitutes one of the most fundamental threats to our common security.

2. Georgia affirms that nuclear non-proliferation and continued progress on nuclear disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy are vital and impose responsibilities on all States. It urges all States to:

- Accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention
- Take urgent action to eliminate the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction
- Support efforts to advance disarmament globally
- Maintain a moratorium on nuclear test explosions pending the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; and call on States to sign and ratify the Treaty
- Work with all States towards the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in order to prevent proliferation and advance disarmament.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[26 May 2010]

1. Pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 64/34 entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation", adopted on 2 December 2009, the views of the Government of Mexico are set forth below.

2. Mexico believes that progress in respect of the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation is an essential element for building trust and preventing conflicts among States.

3. In this regard, Mexico has always expressed support for disarmament with a view to achieving greater international stability on the basis of the principles of the maintenance of international peace and security; to that end, it suggests the following steps:

(a) To urge the nuclear-weapon States to reduce the size of their nuclear arsenals, thereby reducing the nuclear threat in the near future;

(b) To promote the development of greater measures of transparency in the nuclear field, particularly in respect of the implementation of the agreements reached and as a voluntary measure to build confidence so as to continue to progress in nuclear disarmament;

(c) To seek agreements aimed at the reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons;

(d) To call upon States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and On Their Destruction to fulfil their obligations without delay, particularly with regard to the prompt destruction of all their chemical arsenals;

(e) To promote universal accession to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, particularly among the States of annex 2, in order to ensure its early entry into force;

(f) To strengthen the protocols regarding the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, which are, for the most part, acquired through illicit channels;

(g) To seek the establishment of a treaty on the arms trade which would include a system of marking, the registration of firearms and ammunition and of ballistic fingerprints on weapons involved in crimes, and control of the sale of weapons.

4. Mexico submits reports every year with a view to increasing transparency in the area of disarmament.

5. At the domestic level, Mexico is carrying out the following actions in relation to the promotion of disarmament and non-proliferation:

(a) Mexico is enforcing and implementing the legal instruments to which it is a party and, likewise, is promoting the accession of other countries to them, with the objective of making global disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons an observable, tangible and measurable reality for all States parties;

(b) Mexico regards disarmament and non-proliferation as pillars in the building of a world free from the threat of nuclear weapons;

(c) It is contributing at the national level through the participation of military personnel in regional and international forums, the submission of reports to the United Nations and the provision of advice on undertaking various international commitments and through the enforcement of its domestic legislation, specifically the implementation of the federal law on firearms and explosives;

(d) Administrative and legal measures are being implemented to prevent and avoid the proliferation of conventional weapons, harmonizing existing legislation to regulate and control the import and export of weapons, powders and explosives, chemical devices and substances and materials that can be used for weapons manufacture;

(e) Arms regulation is complicated at the international level by the absence of a mechanism for standardization, for either conventional or non-conventional weapons, and because there is no catalogue of weapons and ammunition;

(f) Mexico does not produce, stockpile, possess or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, anti-personnel mines or cluster munitions.

Qatar

[Original: English]
[1 April 2010]

1. Qatar reaffirms its firm position that multilateral disarmament agreements provide Member States with a consultation and cooperation mechanism for solving any problems that may arise concerning the goals of the provisions of conventions or their implementation. This can be carried out through relevant international measures, within the framework of the United Nations.

2. Similarly, Qatar reaffirms the absolute legitimacy of multilateral diplomacy in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. It also reaffirms that multilateralism is an essential principle for negotiation in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, with the view to preserving, enhancing and broadening the scope of international standards.